

The Pending Claims

Claims 1-3 and 6 are currently pending. Reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

Amendments to the Claims

The claims have been amended so as to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. In particular, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the light-resisting agent comprises an aromatic amine or phenol with the proviso that the light-resisting agent does not comprise a dye. Claims 4, 5, 7, and 8 have been canceled. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments. The precise amendments to the claims, as well as the text of the pending claims as amended, are set forth on attachments hereto.

Summary of the Office Action

The Examiner sets forth a restriction between Groups I (claims 1-6) and II (claims 7 and 8). Based on the tentative election of Group I, the Examiner rejects claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over So et al. (U.S. 5,552,221).

Discussion of the Restriction Requirement

The Applicants elect the claims of Group I (i.e., claims 1-6) without traverse. The non-elected claims have been canceled accordingly.

Discussion of the Sections 102/103 Rejection

According to the Office Action, So et al. discloses a polybenzazole article that contains at least about 0.5% by weight of a dye compound and indicates that the dye compounds are useful to absorb light in a wavelength range of about 300 nm to about 600 nm. The Examiner contends that, although So et al. does not disclose that the polybenzazole article has a regular reflectance of not more than 30% in not less than 30% of the wavelength region of from 450 nm to 700 nm, it must inherently have such a property since the other elements of the article are the same as that of the present invention.

So et al. discloses the use of dye compounds to be used with polybenzazole articles. Such dye compounds include naphthols, Acid Blacks, Blues, Fuchins, Greens, Oranges, Reds, Violets, Yellows, Primulin, and Nuclear Fast Red (see, for example, col. 6, lines 30-38). In contrast, the pending claims recite that the light-resisting agent comprises an aromatic amine or phenol with the proviso that the light-resisting agent does not comprise a dye. Therefore, the claimed invention is distinct from So et al. and is not anticipated by it.

Moreover, So et al. *only* discloses the use of dye compounds and does not teach or suggest the use of aromatic amines or phenols that are *not* dyes. While So et al. teaches the use of naphthols (col. 6, line 31), such compounds are dye compounds that are naphthols, rather than non-dye compounds that are naphthols. So et al. does not teach or suggest the use of a light-resisting agent comprising an aromatic amine or phenol that is not a dye. Inasmuch as So et al. does not teach or suggest that aromatic amines or phenols that are not dye compounds can be used, polybenzazole articles produced by the method of So et al. could not reasonably be expected to inherently have a regular reflectance of not more than 30% in not less than 30% of the wavelength region of from 450 nm to 700 nm. In addition, there is no teaching or motivation to modify the polybenzazole article of So et al. to use such a light-resisting agent or that the use of such a light-resisting agent could be used successfully in the polybenzazole article disclosed therein, let alone that the resulting polybenzazole article would exhibit extremely superior light resistance (see the results reported for Examples 1-9 in comparison to the results reported for Examples 10-12 and Comparative Examples 1-3 as set forth in Table 1 on specification page 14). Accordingly, So et al. cannot be said to render the present invention obvious.

Since the present invention as defined by the pending claims is novel and unobvious in view of the teachings of So et al., Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

The application is considered to be in good and proper form for allowance, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

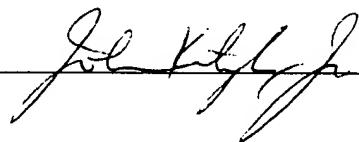

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Date: January 9, 2002

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION (along with any documents referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231.

Date: January 9, 2002



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PATENT
Attorney Docket No. 203924

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Kodama et al.

Art Unit: 1711

Application No. 09/502,834

Examiner: D. Truong

Filed: February 11, 2000

For: POLYBENZAZOLE ARTICLE
AND PRODUCTION METHOD
THEREOF

**AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS MADE IN
RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION DATED JULY 10, 2001**

*(Deletions indicated by crossed-out text,
while insertions are indicated by underlined text)*

1. (Amended) A polybenzazole article superior in light resistance, which comprises a polybenzazole and a light-resisting agent that allows for a regular reflectance of the article of not more than 30% in not less than 30% of the wavelength region of from 450 nm to 700 nm, wherein the light-resisting agent comprises an aromatic amine or phenol with the proviso that the light-resisting agent does not comprise a dye.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

7. (Canceled)

8. (Canceled)